ARJUNA-- A GREAT WARRIOR AND FRIEND OF KRISHNA

Dr. Madhusudan Krishna Das

INTRODUCTION

Arjuna was the third son of Pandu, the king of Hastinapura (now known as New Delhi). He took his birth due to the conjuction between Indra (King of heaven) and Kunti (queen of Hastinapura).This is why he was called a Kshtraya Putra of Pandu.

In the past life he was a Rishi (saint). At that time his name was Nara Risi. He used to meditate in the Vadrika Ashrama along with the Narayana Risi. He was born in the month of Falguna (10 th month of the Bengali year) at Rishashringa mountain in Purnima tithi(full moon at day time).At the moment of his birth a celestial voice came to Kunti as –

" O Kunti, this child will be strong like Parsurama, his strength would he as good as that of Vishnu ; he would be best among the warriors and would be very famous.(Mahabharat AdiParva 123.43). The real name of Arjuna was Krishna.

CAUSES OF THE TEN NAMES OF ARJUNA

Arjuna had more than one name-i.e, he was familiar in various names. He had 10 names which are as follows:-

(i) First, of all he collected huge amount of wealth by conquering many countries/kingdoms.As such his one name becomes Dhananjay.
(ii) Second,after joining in any war he did not come back without victory. For this reason he is also called as Bijoy.
(iii) Third, the colour of the horses of his chariot was white. For this reason he was known as Swetabahana.
(iv) Fourth,the date of his birth the star was Uttar-Falguni. As such his one name becomes Falguni.
(v) Fifth, in the war field , he did not do any horrible activities. For this reason his one name becomes Bivatshu.
(vi) Sixth, at the time of fighting with the demons, Indra gave him a Kirita. He placed it on his forehead. For this reason his another name becomes Kiriti.
(vii) Seventh- Arjun could throw arrow by two hands simultaneously or at the same time and as such he gets the name Sabhasachi.
(viii) Eighth-He loves to do any good activities. Forthis reason he is called as Arjuna.
(ix) Nineth-He aws very great warrior. As a result he get a name called Jishnu.
(x) Tenth- the colour of his body was brown but seems bright. He could also attract the minds of all people. This is why his father gave him a name Krishna.(Mahabharata Uddog Parva 44.9)

In addition to the above names Krishna called him as Gurakesha-because he could control his sleep. In Bhagavad Gita the Supreme Personality of god head Krishna sometimes called him as Arjuna , sometimes as Gurakesha and in other time as Dhananjoy.

BECAME AN EXPERT IN ALL TYPES OF WAR (BECOME A GREAT WARRIOR)

Dronacarya was the principal for giving military education to the Kurus and the Pandavas. Arjun rendered services to his Guru sincerely. As a result Dronacarya promised that he would give

Arjuna all techniques and teaching of almost all weapons. As a result he became expert in handling all sorts of weapons.

At one time, for some reasons he was to travel different places. One day he came across a hunter and there they fought each other to get a boar. At last the hunter showed that he is Shiva. Arjuna surrendered and prayed to him for powerful weapons. Shiva became pleased and gladly gave him Pasupat weapon which is a very dangerous weapon.

Then at the invitation of his father Indra . Arjun went to heaven. At the request of Indra he killed two great demons named Nibat and Kabach with the help of the Pasupat. Indra became very pleased and gave Arjuna powerful weapons. Other Devas also gave him their own weapons. As a result Arjuna became one of the best warrior in the world.

Not only so, for satisfying his Guru Dronacarya he alone defeated the Punchalraj Drupada and brought him at the feet of Dronacarya. For this act Dronacarya was so much pleased with Arjuna that he gave some expectional weapons which he kept with him.

MARRIAGE OF ARJUNA

Arjuna got Drupadi as a wife after fulfilling the conditions set by Drupada (King of Panchaldesh).Later on in order to give respect for Kunti's words, five brother married Drupadi at a time.

After that due to some reason , Arjuna travelled different places in India. In the way he reached Manipur. The king accepted him with due respect one day Arjuna saw the princes of Manipur-Chitrangada. She was very beautiful. Arjun proposed to the king for marriage to Chitrangada. The king agreed with a condition that Chitrangada would remain in this country and if any son come out of the conjunction between them that son would be the king of Manipur. Arjuna agreed to the conditions, consequently, he married Chitrangada. Chitrangada has a female friend named Udipi(the daughter of a serpent King named Agiravat). She loved Arjuna and with the consent of Chitrangada Arjuna stayed Manipur for some years. And during this time Chitrangada, Arjuna married Udipi. Arjun stayed in Manipur for a period of time . During this Chitrangada gave birth to a child named Vadhrubahana and Udipi gave birth to a child named Eravan. Then Arjuna left Manipur and at sometime he reached Dwarka where he was welcomed by Krishna, Balarama and their wives.

One day he saw Subhadra, the sister of Krishna and Balaram. Arjuna loved her and Subhadra also fell in love with Arjuna. Krishna came to know about their love affairs. But Balaram decided to give Subhadra to Duryadhana. As such Krishna with the help His wife Sattabhama gave Subhadra at the hand of His friend Arjuna. In course of time Subhadra gave birth to a son whose name was Abhimanyu. Arjuna also got a son named Shrutakirti from Drupadi. As such Arjun had four sons.

ARJUN SELECTED KRISHNA AS DRIVER OF HIS CHARIOT

Krishna was a relative to both Kauravas and the Pandavas. As such each party wanted Krishna to join them. But in reality Krishna liked the Pandavas due to their submissive behaviour and real love for him. He disliked the Kauravas due to their misbehaviour towards the Pandavas and others. In addition to these they deceived the Pandavas in dice play for which Krishna hated them.

To get Krishna as a warrior. Duryadhana and Arjuna reached at Dwarka . Krishna then made tactics so that He could avoid Duryadhana and accept Arjuna. Krishna said that he had ten lakhs

Narayani soldiers each of which is equivalent to Him in the battle field. On the other side He is alone and decided not to take part in the war. Now let your choose either me or my ten lakhs soldiers. Arjun prayed to Krishna to be driver of his chariot and Krishna agreed to this.

Duryadhana considered Arjuna as a fool and very much glad to accept ten lakhs Narayani soldiers.

THE GREAT WAR OF KURUKSHETRA AND ILLUSION OF ARJUNA

Before the war began, Arjuna requested Krishna to see who were the persons present to fight with them. Krishna pause Arjun's chariot between the two parties. Arjuna found his grandfather Bhishma, Acarya Drone, Kripacarya, friend Ashathama, the Kuru brothers and so on. Seeing them Arjun decided not to fight against them. At that time he was in the mode of human body. He categorically said to Krishna that he does not want to kill the Acaryas, relatives and friends to get Kingdom again. So he left his bow Gandhiva and sat down on the chariot.

ARJUNA GET RID OFF FROM THE ILLUSION BY LISTENING BHAGAVAD GITA

In order to make free Arjuna from his mental illusion, Krishna told him the summary of Gita and at last Arjuna came to understand that his approach of not fighting was totally a false ego.

He then understood that his chariot driver is not an ordinary man but the Supreme Personality of Godhead Krishna. Then Arjun declared: You are the supreme god, original Purush, Vishnu, etc.(B.G 10.15). Arjun also declared: My dear Krishna, O! infallible one, my illusion is now gone. I have regained my memory by your mercy. I am now firm and free from doubt and I am prepared to act according to your instructions.(B.G 18.73)

PARTICIPATION IN THE WAR AND DESTROYED THE KAURAVAS

Arjuna, now under the direction and instruction of Krishna joined the war. By the grace and active cooperation of Krishna he could make Bhishma as inactive, killed great warriors like Karna, Somdatta,Bhurashrava,Susharma,Bhagadatta,etc.

He killed Jaidratha for the active help of Krishna because his son Abhimanyu was killed by Jaidratha . He could kill Karna due to intelligence and appropriate advice of Krishna. At one stage of the war between Arjuna and Karna, Karna's chariot drowned in the ground. Karna prayed to Arjuna that he has no arms at hand, he had to lift his chariot from the ground first and then he will fight with Arjun. Arjun agreed. But Krishna remind him the past evil acts of Karna including the death of his son Abhimanyu where Karna actively took part. As a result Arjun became angry and threw an arrow towards Karna. Then Karna died.

WENT TOWARDS MAHAPRASTHAN

After several years of the war Yudhisthir and others decided to proceed to Himalayas for meditation there. But on the way first Drupadi fell down and died. In this way all except Yudhisthir died. And Arjun was the fourth person to fall and die.